

Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music

National Council for Liturgical Music

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
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INTRODUCTION

1 The following guidelines are offered to composers of liturgical music to assist them in providing appropriate settings of music for the Order of Mass. Guidelines for setting texts for the celebration of the sacraments will be forthcoming as the revised English texts become available.

The Ministry of the Composer

2 In the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* we read:

Composers, filled with the Christian spirit, should feel that their vocation is to cultivate sacred music and increase its store of treasures.

Let them produce compositions which have the qualities proper to genuine sacred music, not confining themselves to works which can be only sung by large choirs, but providing also for the needs of small choirs and for the active participation of the entire assembly of the faithful.

The texts intended to be sung must always be in conformity with Catholic teaching; indeed they should be drawn chiefly from Holy Scripture and from liturgical sources.¹

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, composers have made an outstanding contribution to the public worship of the Church since the Second Vatican Council. They have provided us with strong Mass settings and acclamations which have enabled the active participation of the assembly. They have provided us with memorable psalm settings and a collection of much loved hymns and canticles. By setting the liturgical texts to music and by composing hymns imbued with the words of Sacred Scripture, composers have shaped the faith of worshiping communities across our land. They have created melodies that have stirred the faithful, as members of the one Body of Christ, to lift their hearts and voices in song to God.

The composer, like all music ministers, is a servant of the Church's prayer. The composer provides a *service to the word*, allowing the text to be communicated, proclaimed and prayed. By setting the sacred texts to music, the composer adds nobility to these texts and frequently reveals levels of meaning in the texts which are not immediately evident when they are spoken. By setting the approved liturgical texts to music the composer enables the assembly to participate fully in the Church's prayer. The best compositions are written after the texts have been

¹ Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (December 4, 1963), art. 121.

interiorized through prayer, particularly in the context of the liturgical assembly.

The hymn text writer is also a servant of the Church's prayer:

- By creating texts which are inspired by the Sacred Scriptures and the liturgical texts and are directed to God, the text writer helps the assembly express the Church's faith.
- By avoiding sentimental and personal expressions of faith in favour of texts which articulate the faith of the whole Church, text writers nourish the assembly in its faith and empower the assembly to bear effective witness to the Gospel in the world.

Both composers and text writers are servants of the people of God. By providing texts and melodies which are accessible to the assembly, they foster the full, conscious and active participation by all the faithful, which the Church so earnestly desires.² This is particularly true when composers provide music which can be used in diverse communities with a variety of resources available to them.

² SC, art. 14.

I. EVALUATING AND APPROVING MUSIC AND TEXT

Approval for Liturgical Use

3 The approval of music for liturgical use rests with the Conference of Bishops.³ It is not permitted to use compositions during the liturgy without at least the approval of the local Bishop.

Compositions are to be submitted to the local Bishop, and will be forwarded by the Bishop's office to the National Liturgy Office. These submissions will be reviewed by the National Council for Liturgical Music, using established criteria (below). If a favourable opinion is given, the council then conveys its recommendation to the Bishop for approval of the composition for liturgical use.

Criteria for Assessing Music and Texts

4 The Episcopal Commission for Liturgy (English Sector) has established criteria for assessing music and texts to be used in the liturgy. Liturgical music is evaluated by asking such questions as:

Regarding Music

- *The relationship between the music and the liturgical context*
 - Is the melody singable by an assembly?
 - Is the melodic range suitable for an average assembly?
 - Is the rhythm accessible to the assembly or too complex?
 - Does the phrasing facilitate participation? Does it allow people to breathe?
 - Is there consistency in the verse structure suited to congregational singing?
 - Is the music seasonally appropriate? Is it reserved in preparatory seasons, restrained in penitential times, festive in other seasons?
- *The relationship between text and music*
 - Does the music suit the text? Does it support the text or distract from it?
 - Are natural speech rhythms and inflections respected, ignored or even contradicted, in melody, rhythm and metre?
- *The artistry of the music*

³ *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, n.393: Bearing in mind the important place that singing has in a celebration as a necessary or integral part of the Liturgy, it is for the Conference of Bishops to approve suitable musical settings especially for the texts of the Ordinary of Mass, for the people's responses and acclamations and for the special rites that occur in the course of the liturgical year. Likewise it is for the Conference to judge which musical forms, melodies, and musical instruments may be lawfully admitted into divine worship, insofar as these are truly suitable for sacred use, or can be made suitable.

- Is the melody memorable? Can it stand on its own without accompaniment?
- Does the melody provide interest and balance (steps and leaps)?
- Can the music be performed in a variety of styles?

Regarding Texts

- *Theological merit*
 - Is the text in some way directed to God?
 - Is the text biblically inspired? Is it rich in sacramental and biblical language and imagery (typology)?
 - Is the text theologically sound? Does it express authentic Catholic faith?
 - Does this text contribute to the existing repertoire of the community?
 - Will it help the community sing the fullest expression of our Catholic faith?

- *Liturgical appropriateness*
 - If the text is a ritual text, is it in accord with the approved liturgical text?
 - Is the text consistent with the language of liturgical prayer?
 - Does the text use corporate language (“we” rather than “I”) in expressing the prayer of the assembly?
 - Is the text too personal, or more suited to private devotion than to liturgical use? Is it so well suited to a particular piety that it will appeal to only part of the assembly?
 - Does the text include elements of petition, praise or remembrance of God’s saving deeds?

- *Quality of language*
 - Is the text grammatically correct?
 - Does the text possess clarity of language?
 - Does the text employ contemporary English?
 - Does the text incorporate metaphors and evocative images? Is there a movement of thought from one verse to the next?
 - Does the author respect the prosody of the text (the rhythmic structure of speech)?
 - Is there consistency of address within the composition?

Regarding Acclamations

- Do they adhere to the approved liturgical text?
- Does the melody engage the assembly in a way that is truly acclamatory?
- Is there a tonal and melodic relationship between the acclamations which are intended to be sung together during a single liturgical celebration?
- Does the music employ minimal syncopation?

The Language of Music

5 While the Church prizes unaccompanied song and continues to sing and compose in this way, there are many styles of music that have the capacity to lead people to give glory to God and to grow in holiness. Care must be taken, however, that the style does not have unwelcome associations for those who gather to celebrate the Church's liturgy. Melodies with secular and commercial resonances are to be avoided. Ideally, new music should first be tested outside the liturgy to ensure it is free from associations which would distract from the liturgy. Some compositions will find a home in a devotional setting, rather than in liturgical use.

Particular care is necessary when using or adapting existing melodies, even familiar religious songs. The structure of the liturgical text should be respected.

Preparing Music for Publication

6 When preparing music for publication, it is important that composers secure copyrights for liturgical texts. Accuracy in the texts respecting capitalization, punctuation etc. is essential. See www.icelweb.org for more information regarding copyrights and the liturgical texts.

II. THE LITURGICAL TEXTS

7 The translation of the third edition of the Roman Missal has created a wonderful opportunity for composers to write new settings of the many sung texts of the liturgy. At the same time, the revised *Lectionary for Mass*, approved for use in Canada, provides an opportunity for composers to add to the existing repertoire of responsorial psalm settings and acclamations for the Liturgy of the Word.

The fifth edition of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, which was approved for Canada in 2011, is an essential guide to understanding the nature of the Mass texts which can be set to music. Excerpts of this instruction are included in this document to assist composers in their understanding of the purpose and function of the liturgical texts within the Order of Mass. The full text is available online at the National Liturgy Office's website: www.nlo.cccb.ca.

The Ritual Books

The Roman Missal

This contains the Order of Mass and the proper texts for the liturgical seasons and the Saints. Also of interest to composers are the texts for the Entrance and Communion antiphons and other texts for processions, such as on the Presentation of the Lord and Palm Sunday, as well as hymns and other texts for the Easter Triduum.

The Lectionary

This contains the texts for the Liturgy of the Word, including the Responsorial Psalm, the Gospel Acclamation and the four Sequences.

The current edition of the Lectionary uses the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. The psalms in the Lectionary are also from this source. (Previously, the Responsorial Psalm texts were from the Revised Grail Psalms.)

The *Graduale Romanum*

This contains the proper Latin chants for liturgies in the Roman Missal. While no official English translation of the *Graduale* has been promulgated, some good translations are available, and will provide the composer with a wealth of texts from the liturgical tradition of the Church.

The Simple Gradual

This contains a simplified repertoire of Entrance, Offertory, Communion and diverse other chants for the liturgical year. An official English translation was made by ICEL in 1968.

Sacraments and Other Liturgical Celebrations

Books published by the CCCB for the celebration of the sacraments and other rites of the Church provide a treasure of liturgical texts waiting to be explored by composers. Good music for the

rites is much needed. However, many ritual books will be revised in the coming years in conformity with the new translations. Composers are cautioned that new compositions may require revision as new editions of the ritual books are issued. The website of the CCCB, and of the National Liturgy Office, should be consulted periodically.

The present CCCB liturgical books are titled:

- Marriage – Ritual and Pastoral Notes
- Order of Christian Funerals
- Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum
- Sunday Celebration of the Word and Hours
- Rite of Baptism for Children
- Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
- Rite of Confirmation

General Principles for Setting Mass Texts to Music

Introduction

8 The primary purpose of music at the Eucharist is to enable the full, conscious and active participation of the assembly. Such participation is evoked in an elegant variety of forms, as various parts of the celebration are sung in different ways: by the full assembly (e.g. the Gospel Acclamation), by ministers (presider, cantor, choir) in alternation with the assembly (e.g. the Responsorial psalm), by the choir alone and by a minister alone (e.g. the Eucharistic Prayer). Composers may embellish the song of the assembly with vocal harmonies or instrumental accompaniments, taking care to give the singing of the assembly the primacy it is due.

Liturgical and Musical Structures

9 Liturgical texts often take a particular form. The most common are:

- Acclamations (e.g., *Alleluia*, before the Gospel, and the Holy, Holy [*Sanctus*], Memorial Acclamation, and *Amen* following the Doxology at the conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer).
- Litanies (e.g., Lord, Have mercy (*Kyrie*) and the Lamb of God (*Agnus Dei*)).
- Responses to greetings (e.g., the preface dialogue and the responses at the conclusion of readings and prayers).
- Hymns and canticles which may be in metrical, antiphonal or through-composed form.

Composers need to understand the form and its textual structure as well as how it functions within the Order of Mass when setting the liturgical text to music.

Mass Settings

10 Almost all texts of the liturgy may be set to music. However, it must be remembered that some parts ought to be sung by the entire assembly; others may be sung in part or in whole by the choir, cantor or presider. In general, the processional hymns, the responses and acclamations during the Mass are to be sung by the entire assembly.

It is not necessary for composers to offer complete Mass settings of the Ordinary parts of the Mass (*Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, Memorial Acclamation, *Amen* and *Agnus Dei*). The *Kyrie* and *Gloria* belong to the introductory rites of the Mass; the *Sanctus*, Memorial Acclamation and *Amen* belong to the Eucharistic Prayer; and the *Agnus Dei* belongs to the Communion Rite.

Because of their locations in the Order of Mass and the difference in their forms and functions, there is no need to have a unified setting of all parts. However, the acclamations for the Eucharistic Prayer must have an evident relationship to each other, similar in key and motive, since they are acclamations within a single prayer.

The Music in the Roman Missal

11 The music provided in the Roman Missal indicates the integral nature of music to the liturgy. It provides music in the proper place for the priest and offers a basic setting suitable for use by any assembly.

Wherever music is suggested in the Missal a chant setting is provided. Key signatures are avoided to allow the music to be sung at a pitch suitable for the assembly and the ministers.

Chants for the Priest and Other Ministers

12 It is strongly recommended that priests learn to sing the chants provided in the Missal for the Preface Dialogue, Invitation to the Memorial Acclamation and Doxology at the conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer.

Though composers may provide settings of the invitation to the Memorial Acclamation (“The mystery of faith”) and the Doxology (“Through him, and with him, and in him”), not all presiders can be expected to sing these. It would be best if new compositions of the Memorial Acclamation and Amen transition smoothly from the priest’s melodies in the Roman Missal.

Care should be taken, especially in settings of longer texts such as the Eucharistic Prayer, the *Exsultet* or chants for readings, that the text can be proclaimed with clarity. The music should be cohesive and have a perceivable shape, and the form should be in keeping with the structure of the text.

The presider is not generally accompanied; if used, accompaniment of the presider must be subdued. Such accompaniment should merely support the pitch and not draw attention to itself.

Paraphrased Texts

13 Paraphrases or versifications of the liturgical texts do not replace the approved texts of the Mass. Since the texts spoken or sung by the priest or assembly are ritual texts, they are **never** to be paraphrased.

Adaptation of Texts

14 Normally, texts are sung in their entirety without interruption. By way of exception, to facilitate participation, refrains or acclamations for the assembly, based on the existing text, may be added. For example, the *Gloria* and Creed may be set in this way.

With the exception of “O” (e.g. “O Lord”), no additions to the text are permitted. The repetition of words and phrases within a particular text is permissible, but it should neither unduly prolong the setting nor affect the structure or meaning of the text.

Hymns and Chants using Other Texts

15 Hymns may be sung during the entrance procession, the procession with the gifts, during and after the communion procession, and at the end of the celebration.

When composing such chants and hymns, the criteria for assessing music and texts must be met, and approval sought. A discussion of these criteria and others is given above, in the section titled “Evaluating and Approving Music and Text.”

IV. THE ORDER OF MASS

The Introductory Rites

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

46. The rites that precede the Liturgy of the Word, namely, the Entrance, the Greeting, the Penitential Act, the *Kyrie*, the *Gloria in excelsis* (Glory to God in the highest) and Collect, have the character of a beginning, an introduction, and a preparation. Their purpose is to ensure that the faithful, who come together as one, establish communion and dispose themselves properly to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily.

In certain celebrations that are combined with Mass according to the norms of the liturgical books, the Introductory Rites are omitted or take place in a particular way.

Outline

Entrance

Greeting of the Assembled People

Penitential Act Form 1

or

Penitential Act Form 2

or

Penitential Act Form 3

or

Rite for the Blessing and Sprinkling of Water

Gloria in Excelsis

or Other Opening Rite

(Palm Sunday, Presentation of the Lord, Ritual Masses, etc.)

Collect (Opening Prayer)

The Entrance

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

47. When the people are gathered, and as the Priest enters with the Deacon and ministers, the Entrance Chant begins. Its purpose is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical time or festivity, and accompany the procession of the Priest and ministers.

48. This chant is sung alternately by the choir and the people or similarly by a cantor and the people, or entirely by the people, or by the choir alone. In the dioceses of Canada the Entrance Chant may be chosen from among the following: the antiphon with its Psalm from the *Graduale Romanum* or the *Graduale Simplex*, or another chant that is suited to the sacred action, the day, or the time of year, and whose text has been approved by the Conference of Bishops of Canada.

If there is no singing at the Entrance, the antiphon given in the Missal is recited either by the faithful, or by some of them, or by a reader; otherwise, it is recited by the Priest himself, who may even adapt it as an introductory explanation (cf. no. 31).

Entrance Chant

16 The antiphons are sentences from scripture intended for singing by an assembly with psalm verses sung by a cantor or choir. Though the format is similar to the Responsorial Psalm, their function, accompanying the Entrance procession, requires a style in keeping with the act of processing. Composers are encouraged to compose settings of psalms which can be used for processional music. This would be a valuable contribution to our repertoire.

Psalm verses for the Entrance Chant may be taken from any translation approved by the Episcopal Conference. A doxology is sung at the end of the psalm.

The texts of the antiphons in the Roman Missal provide a useful resource for composers which can be set in a variety of styles. These psalm texts may provide the basis of appropriate hymn texts for a particular season or feast.

In general, study of the Psalms is indispensable for composers.⁴

⁴ See for example Irene Nowell, *Sing a New Song: The Psalms in the Sunday Lectionary* (Michael Glazier Books); Walter Brueggemann, *Spirituality of the Psalms* (Augsburg Fortress Press), etc.

Penitential Act

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

51. After this, the Priest calls upon the whole community to take part in the Penitential Act, which, after a brief pause for silence, it does by means of a formula of general confession. The rite concludes with the Priest's absolution, which, however, lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance.

From time to time on Sundays, especially in Easter Time, instead of the customary Penitential Act, the blessing and sprinkling of water may take place as a reminder of Baptism.

Penitential Act Form 1

The *Confiteor* ("I confess") is usually said, followed by the *Kyrie Eleison* (below).

Penitential Act Form 2

The following text may be sung; it is followed by the absolution and the *Kyrie Eleison*.

The priest says:

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

The people respond:

For we have sinned against you.

Priest:

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

People:

And grant us your salvation.

The absolution by the priest follows:

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

The people respond:

Amen.

Penitential Act Form 3

17 The following text is provided in the Roman Missal as a model. The invocations may be spoken or sung by the priest, or a deacon or other minister. Other invocations may be used, provided that they follow the same structure and style of the texts in the Missal. They should be addressed to Christ and acknowledge his saving act, and not be a litany of sins committed.

Priest:

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:
Lord, have mercy. *Or:* Kyrie, eleison.

The people respond:

Lord, have mercy. *Or:* Kyrie, eleison.

Priest:

You came to call sinners:
Christ, have mercy. *Or:* Christe, eleison.

People:

Christ, have mercy. *Or:* Christe, eleison.

Priest:

You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us:
Lord, have mercy. *Or:* Kyrie, eleison.

People:

Lord, have mercy. *Or:* Kyrie, eleison.

The absolution by the priest follows:

May almighty God have mercy on us,

forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

The people respond:

Amen.

Kyrie Eleison

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

52. After the Penitential Act, the *Kyrie, eleison (Lord, have mercy)*, is always begun, unless it has already been part of the Penitential Act. Since it is a chant by which the faithful acclaim the Lord and implore his mercy, it is usually executed by everyone, that is to say, with the people and the choir or cantor taking part in it. Each acclamation is usually pronounced twice, though it is not to be excluded that it be repeated several times, by reason of the character of the various languages, as well as of the artistry of the music or of other circumstances. When the *Kyrie* is sung as a part of the Penitential Act, a “trope” precedes each acclamation.

The *Kyrie* is usually alternated between the presider (or cantor) and people.

V. Lord, have mercy	R. Lord, have mercy.
V. Christ, have mercy.	R. Christ, have mercy.
V. Lord, have mercy.	R. Lord, have mercy.

Or:

V. Kyrie, eleison.	R. Kyrie, eleison.
V. Christe, eleison.	R. Christe, eleison.
V. Kyrie, eleison.	R. Kyrie, eleison.

Rite for the Blessing and Sprinkling of Water

18 The blessing and sprinkling of water serves as a memorial of Easter and baptism. When it is used, it replaces the Penitential Act. The use of a chant or song (sung by the assembly or choir) during the sprinkling will highlight the meaning of the rite.

The blessing of water may also be sung (see *RM* page 1443). In this case, the people respond in the singing of an acclamation.

The Gloria in Excelsis

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

53. The *Gloria in excelsis* (*Glory to God in the highest*) is a most ancient and venerable hymn by which the Church, gathered in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb. The text of this hymn may not be replaced by any other. It is intoned by the Priest or, if appropriate, by a cantor or by the choir; but it is sung either by everyone together, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone. If not sung, it is to be recited either by everybody together or by two choirs responding one to the other.

It is sung or said on Sundays outside Advent and Lent, and also on Solemnities and Feasts, and at particular celebrations of a more solemn character.

The following is the approved text for the Gloria:

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly king,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
 have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
 receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
 have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

Outline

First Reading
Responsorial Psalm
Second Reading
[Sequence]
Acclamation before the Gospel
Homily
Profession of Faith
Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful)

The Responsorial Psalm

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

61. After the First Reading follows the Responsorial Psalm, which is an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word and which has great liturgical and pastoral importance, since it fosters meditation on the Word of God.

The Responsorial Psalm should correspond to each reading and should usually be taken from the Lectionary.

It is preferable for the Responsorial Psalm to be sung, at least as far as the people's response is concerned. Hence the psalmist, or cantor of the Psalm, sings the Psalm verses at the ambo or another suitable place, while the whole congregation sits and listens, normally taking part by means of the response, except when the Psalm is sung straight through, that is, without a response. However, in order that the people may be able to sing the Psalm response more easily, texts of some responses and Psalms have been chosen for the different times of the year or for the different categories of Saints. These may be used instead of the text corresponding to the reading whenever the Psalm is sung. If the Psalm cannot be sung, then it should be recited in a way that is particularly suited to fostering meditation on the Word of God.

Instead of the Psalm assigned in the Lectionary, there may be sung either the Responsorial Gradual from the *Graduale Romanum*, or the Responsorial Psalm or the *Alleluia* Psalm from the *Graduale Simplex*, as described in these books.

19 The text for the responsorial psalm is found in the *Lectionary*. Psalms are assigned for each day. However, for Commons and Ritual Masses there is a choice of texts. Seasonal psalms

are also provided in the *Lectionary* which may replace those assigned for Sunday and weekday celebrations. These are particularly for the benefit of cantors and congregations unable to sing a different psalm each day.

The texts in the Canadian Lectionary are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. It is presumed that composers will set the text as given in the *Lectionary*. To foster meditation on the Word of God or because of the shortness of the refrain text, it is permitted to expand the text by the repetition of a phrase of the refrain. Note, however, that refrains of more than 2 phrases should not be expanded.

Preference is given to the responsorial form for musical settings with the response sung by the assembly and the verses sung by a psalmist or cantor. It is also possible to sing the psalm *in directum* either by the psalmist alone or by the whole assembly. Other musical forms have been used successfully such as the use of an ostinato response or a brief *Alleluia* at the end of each line.

It is never permitted to substitute the responsorial psalm with a paraphrase text or a metrical version of the appointed responsorial psalm text.

Each psalm has appointed verses, and these must be respected. Avoid paraphrased refrains or texts.

Sequence

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

64. The Sequence which, except on Easter Sunday and on Pentecost Day, is optional, is sung before the *Alleluia*.

20 Four Sequences are found in the Lectionary:

Easter Sunday	<i>Victimae Paschali</i>	Christians, to the Paschal Victim
Pentecost Sunday	<i>Veni, Sancte Spiritus</i>	Come, Holy Spirit
Corpus Christi	<i>Lauda Sion salvatorem</i>	Sing forth, O Sion
Our Lady of Sorrows	<i>Stabat Mater</i>	At the Cross

New settings of the Sequences which make use of the responsorial or ostinato form are encouraged.

Acclamation before the Gospel

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

62. After the reading that immediately precedes the Gospel, the *Alleluia* or another chant laid down by the rubrics is sung, as the liturgical time requires. An acclamation of this kind constitutes a rite or act in itself, by which the gathering of the faithful welcomes and greets the Lord who is about to speak to them in the Gospel and profess their faith by means of the chant. It is sung by everybody, standing, and is led by the choir or a cantor, being repeated as the case requires. The verse, on the other hand, is sung either by the choir or by a cantor.

a) The *Alleluia* is sung in every time of year other than Lent. The verses are taken from the Lectionary or the *Graduale*.

b) During Lent, instead of the *Alleluia*, the Verse before the Gospel as given in the Lectionary is sung. It is also possible to sing another Psalm or Tract, as found in the *Graduale*.

63. When there is only one reading before the Gospel:

a) during a time of year when the *Alleluia* is prescribed, either an *Alleluia* Psalm or the Responsorial Psalm followed by the *Alleluia* with its verse may be used;

b) during a time of year when the *Alleluia* is not foreseen, either the Psalm and the Verse before the Gospel or the Psalm alone may be used;

c) the *Alleluia* or the Verse before the Gospel, if not sung, may be omitted.

21 The musical setting for the *Alleluia* may include several repetitions of the word and must be singable by the entire assembly. Melodies for the verse(s) of the acclamation, which may be sung by a cantor or choir, ought to be provided for at least one of the assigned verses from the *Lectionary* or the *Graduale*. A simple psalm tone may be most useful, since it can be applied to a variety of verse texts.

During Lent, one of following approved texts (from the Sunday Lectionary, p.108) is used for the acclamation which accompanies the assigned verses from the *Lectionary* or the *Graduale*.

Praise to you, Lord, king of eternal glory!

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ, Wisdom of God the Father!

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God!

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!

Marvellous and great are your works, O Lord!

Salvation, glory, and power to the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful)

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

69. In the Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful, the people respond in some sense to the Word of God which they have received in faith and, exercising the office of their baptismal priesthood, offer prayers to God for the salvation of all. It is desirable that there usually be such a form of prayer in Masses celebrated with the people, so that petitions may be offered for holy Church, for those who govern with authority over us, for those weighed down by various needs, for all humanity, and for the salvation of the whole world.

70. The series of intentions is usually to be:

- a) for the needs of the Church;**
- b) for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world;**
- c) for those burdened by any kind of difficulty;**
- d) for the local community.**

Nevertheless, in any particular celebration, such as a Confirmation, a Marriage, or at a Funeral, the series of intentions may be concerned more closely with the particular occasion.

71. It is for the Priest Celebrant to regulate this prayer from the chair. He himself begins it with a brief introduction, by which he calls upon the faithful to pray, and likewise he concludes it with an oration. The intentions announced should be sober, be composed with a wise liberty and in few words, and they should be expressive of the prayer of the entire community.

They are announced from the ambo or from another suitable place, by the Deacon or by a cantor, a reader, or one of the lay faithful.

The people, for their part, stand and give expression to their prayer either by an invocation said in common after each intention or by praying in silence.

22 Model texts for the intercessions together with sample musical settings are included in the Missal. Usually only the response will be sung but settings may include a tone for the intercessions. If a tone is being set for the intercessions, composers should allow for quiet prayer

in response to each petition before the invitation and response.

It is permissible to provide accompaniment underneath the spoken intentions which will unify the prayer. The accompaniment should not compete for attention with the spoken word. The invitation to the response may be led by the Cantor.

The response should be brief, for example: “In your mercy, hear our prayer;” or “Hear us, O Lord.”

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Preparation of the Gifts

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

74. The procession bringing the gifts is accompanied by the Offertory Chant (cf. no. 37b), which continues at least until the gifts have been placed on the altar. The norms on the manner of singing are the same as for the Entrance Chant (cf. no. 48). Singing may always accompany the rite at the Offertory, even when there is no procession with the gifts.

23 With the exception of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, the Roman Missal does not provide a text for the hymn which accompanies the presentation of the gifts. Antiphons may be found in the *Graduale Romanum* and the *Simple Gradual*. The purpose of music at this moment in the liturgy is to accompany the presentation of the gifts. Sung texts need not speak of bread and wine, nor of offering. Texts expressing joy and praise, or the use of a seasonal hymn, are appropriate. Instrumental music, drawn from religious sources, may also be used, or silence may be observed at this time.

Refer to the section “Hymns and Chants using Other Texts”, above, for composition guidelines concerning newly-composed texts.

It is recommended that the Mass texts which may be spoken aloud by the priest (*Blessed are you, Lord God ...*) not be set to music, lest they detract from the Eucharistic prayer which follows.

The Eucharistic Prayer

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

78. Now the centre and high point of the entire celebration begins, namely, the Eucharistic Prayer itself, that is, the prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. The Priest calls upon the people to lift up their hearts toward the Lord in prayer and thanksgiving; he associates the people with himself in the Prayer that he addresses in the name of the entire community to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the meaning of this Prayer is that the whole congregation of the faithful joins with Christ in confessing the great deeds of God and in the offering of Sacrifice. The Eucharistic Prayer requires that everybody listens to it with reverence and in silence.

147. Then the Priest begins the Eucharistic Prayer. In accordance with the rubrics (cf. no. 365), he selects a Eucharistic Prayer from those found in the Roman Missal or approved by the Apostolic See. By its very nature, the Eucharistic Prayer requires that only the Priest say it, in virtue of his Ordination. The people, for their part, should associate themselves with the Priest in faith and in silence, as well as by means of their interventions as prescribed in the course of the Eucharistic Prayer: namely, the responses in the Preface dialogue, the *Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)*, the acclamation after the Consecration, the acclamation *Amen* after the concluding doxology, as well as other acclamations approved by the Conference of Bishops with the *recognitio* of the Holy See.

It is most appropriate that the Priest sing those parts of the Eucharistic Prayer for which musical notation is provided.

24 The Eucharistic Prayer forms a complete unit from the preface dialogue to the doxology and the Amen. Any musical setting should respect and enhance the unity of the prayer. The use of common motifs in the acclamations, the use of the same or related keys for each of the acclamations (*Sanctus*, Memorial Acclamation and Amen) is desirable.

The preface dialogue and the acclamations belong to the whole assembly. Settings of these parts must be accessible to the average assembly. Choir or cantor parts may be included provided that they facilitate and enhance the assembly's participation.

Preface Dialogue

25 It is preferable to sing the preface dialogue. A setting is provided in the Roman Missal which should be regarded as standard. The approved text for the preface dialogue is as follows.

*The priest begins the Eucharistic Prayer.
Extending his hands, he says:*

The Lord be with you.

The people respond:

And with your spirit.

The priest, raising his hands, continues:

Lift up your hearts.

People:

We lift them up to the Lord.

The priest, with hands extended, adds:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People:

It is right and just.

The Preface

25 It is fitting that the preface be sung by the priest. The Roman Missal provides musical settings for all the prefaces.

Sanctus

26 The Roman Missal envisions that the *Sanctus* be sung in its entirety by the assembly. If refrains are used or choral parts are included, care should be taken that the *Sanctus* retain its character as an acclamation of the whole assembly. The setting of the *Sanctus* should flow naturally from the conclusion of the Preface without an extended introduction. A brief (one- or two-bar) introduction, with a clear statement of the melody to help establish the key and the rhythm, is recommended.

The approved text for the *Sanctus* is as follows.

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Memorial Acclamation

27 Settings for the invitation and memorial acclamation texts are found in the Roman Missal. Composers are free to set these texts to other melodies provided that they are musically related to the other acclamations which are integral to the Eucharistic Prayer. The setting of the acclamation should flow naturally from the invitation by the presider without the need for an extended introduction.

It is desirable that alternate settings of the memorial acclamations can also be sung easily with the music for the invitation provided in the Roman Missal.

The approved texts for the memorial acclamations are as follows.

The priest says:

The mystery of faith.

And the people continue, acclaiming:

We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection
until you come again.

Or:

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,
until you come again.

Or:

Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.

Doxology and Amen

28 Music is provided for the doxology and the Amen in the Roman Missal, and should be regarded as standard. However, composers may set the doxology and people's response to other music. It is strongly encouraged that settings of the response of the people (Amen) can also be sung easily with the setting of the doxology in the Roman Missal.

The Amen, which concludes the entire Eucharistic Prayer, needs to flow naturally from the doxology sung by the presider, without the disruption of a prolonged instrumental introduction.

Repetition of the single Amen in the people's response is desirable as a means to engage the assembly in this most important acclamation. Additional words are not permitted however.

The approved text for the Doxology and Amen is as follows.

The priest says:

Through him, and with him, and in him,
O God, almighty Father,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours,
for ever and ever.

The people acclaim:

Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer – Complete Setting

29 The Roman Missal provides complete chant settings for Eucharistic Prayers I-IV.

Though composers are free to provide alternate unaccompanied chant settings of these prayers, comparable to those in the Missal, care should be taken to respect the structure of the particular text. As with settings of scripture readings, the text should have primacy over the musical expression. In general, musical accompaniment is not permitted during the singing of the Eucharistic Prayer. However, a careful and minimal use of accompaniment to assist the presider in maintaining pitch may be necessary.

New settings must be accessible to average presiders. Refer to the Roman Missal chant settings as models. These employ a simple tone which unifies the entire Eucharistic Prayer, with some variation for the Institution Narrative.

Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children

30 In order to foster active participation with children, the number of acclamations in the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children is greater than the number of acclamations in the prayers used when the assembly is mostly composed of adults. Additional acclamations are identified in the texts for these prayers. When composing music for these acclamations, care must be taken to respect the structure of the prayer, the nature of each acclamation, and the musical relationship between these acclamations and the usual acclamations (*Sanctus*, Memorial Acclamation and Amen).

The Lord's Prayer

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

81. In the Lord's Prayer a petition is made for daily bread, which for Christians means principally the Eucharistic Bread, and entreating also purification from sin, so that what is holy may in truth be given to the holy. The Priest pronounces the invitation to the prayer, and all the faithful say the prayer with him; then the Priest alone adds the embolism, which the people conclude by means of the doxology. The embolism, developing the last petition of the Lord's Prayer itself, asks for deliverance from the power of evil for the whole community of the faithful.

The invitation, the Prayer itself, the embolism, and the doxology by which the people conclude these things are sung or are said aloud.

31 A musical setting of the Lord's Prayer is found in the Roman Missal. This setting ought to be considered as standard. However, according to pastoral need composers may provide other settings. Since this text is to be prayed by the entire assembly, the music should not be so elaborate as to exclude the full participation of the assembly. When composing music for the Lord's Prayer, the doxology, *For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever* should also be set.

Music may also be composed for the introduction to the Lord's Prayer.

The Roman Missal provides music for the embolism which may be sung following the Lord's Prayer. Ideally there should be musical continuity from the Lord's Prayer through to the doxology following the embolism. Musicians should keep in mind the abilities of the average presider when setting this series of texts which form a musical unity.

The approved text for the Lord's Prayer used at Mass is as follows.

The priest introduces the Lord's prayer with the following words:

At the Saviour's command
and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say:

He extends his hands and, together with the people, continues:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

With hands extended, the priest alone continues, saying:

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

The people conclude the prayer, acclaiming:

For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.

Rite of Peace

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

82. There follows the Rite of Peace, by which the Church entreats peace and unity for herself and for the whole human family, and the faithful express to each other their ecclesial communion and mutual charity before communicating in the Sacrament.

Then the Priest, with hands extended, says aloud:

Lord Jesus Christ,
who said to your Apostles:
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you,
look not on our sins,
but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with your will.

He joins his hands.

Who live and reign for ever and ever.

The people reply:

Amen.

The Priest, turned towards the people, extending and then joining his hands, adds:

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

Then, if appropriate, the Deacon, or the Priest, adds:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

32 The text which precedes the greeting and exchange of peace is usually spoken. The introduction and the greeting of peace may be sung, using the music in the Missal. However, no music (neither sung nor instrumental) accompanies the exchange of peace among the members of the assembly.

The Fraction of the Bread

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

83. The Priest breaks the Eucharistic Bread, with the assistance, if the case requires, of the Deacon or a concelebrant. The gesture of breaking bread done by Christ at the Last Supper, which in apostolic times gave the entire Eucharistic Action its name, signifies that the many faithful are made one body (1 Corinthians 10.17) by receiving Communion from the one Bread of Life, which is Christ, who for the salvation of the world died and rose again. The fraction or breaking of bread is begun after the sign of peace and is carried out with proper reverence, and should not be unnecessarily prolonged or accorded exaggerated importance. This rite is reserved to the Priest and the Deacon.

The Priest breaks the Bread and puts a piece of the host into the chalice to signify the unity of the Body and Blood of the Lord in the work of salvation, namely, of the Body of Jesus Christ, living and glorious. The supplication *Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)* is usually sung by the choir or cantor with the congregation replying; or at least recited aloud. This invocation accompanies the fraction of the bread and, for this reason, may be repeated as many times as necessary until the rite has been completed. The final time it concludes with the words *grant us peace*.

33 A model setting for the Agnus Dei is provided in the Roman Missal, which should be regarded as standard. According to pastoral need composers may provide other settings. Any

setting must respect the nature of this song as a litany. The text may be set in other ways such as a verse-refrain structure or an ostinato with verses for a cantor. The final invocation always concludes with *grant us peace*.

The approved text for the litany is as follows:

During the Breaking of the Bread the following is said or sung:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us,
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us,
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

Communion

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

86. While the Priest is receiving the Sacrament, the Communion Chant is begun, its purpose being to express the spiritual union of the communicants by means of the unity of their voices, to show gladness of heart, and to bring out more clearly the “communitarian” character of the procession to receive the Eucharist. The singing is prolonged for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful. However, if there is to be a hymn after Communion, the Communion Chant should be ended in a timely manner. Care should be taken that singers, too, can receive Communion with ease.

87. In the dioceses of Canada singing at Communion may be chosen from among the following: the antiphon from the *Graduale Romanum*, with or without the Psalm, or the antiphon with Psalm from the *Graduale Simplex*, or some other suitable liturgical chant approved by the Conference of Bishops of Canada. This is sung either by the choir alone or by the choir or a cantor with the people. However, if there is no singing, the antiphon given in the Missal may be recited either by the faithful, or by some of them, or by a reader; otherwise, it is recited by the Priest himself after he has received Communion and before he distributes Communion to the faithful.

88. When the distribution of Communion is over, if appropriate, the Priest and faithful pray quietly for some time. If desired, a Psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may also be sung by the whole congregation.

34 The following points from *The Guidelines for Liturgical Music in Canada*⁵ will be helpful when composing texts, or choosing a text for music during the communion procession:

⁵ In preparation when this *Guidelines for Composers* was issued. Previously the general guidelines were found in CCCB, *A Companion to the Catholic Book of Worship III: guidelines for liturgical music* (Ottawa: CCCB Publications, 2006) 34-5.

- The reception of communion has traditionally been accompanied by the singing of a psalm with an appropriate antiphon. The texts for the communion antiphons in the Roman Missal are intended to be sung with appointed psalm verses which are indicated in the *Graduale Romanum* or the *Graduale Simplex*. Musicians may wish to consult these books as well as the indices in the Catholic Book of Worship III to select appropriate psalm refrains and verses to accompany the communion procession. Settings of Psalm 23 and Psalm 34 are especially recommended for the communion procession.
- Hymn texts which express the joy of the assembly in its communion with the Lord and its sharing in the mystery of the Lord's death and resurrection are most appropriate during the communion procession. Similarly, hymns of praise and thanksgiving, and hymns which call to mind the Eucharistic texts found in the scriptures or are seasonal in character may fittingly accompany the communion procession.
- Hymns composed for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and which concentrate on adoration rather than the action of entering into communion, may not be appropriate as communion songs. Similarly, hymns which are directed to the honour of Mary of the saints are generally inappropriate during the communion procession.
- In order to facilitate the assembly's full participation in the communion song, it is recommended that hymns with refrains be used during the procession. The cantor or choir can sing the verses without having to carry a hymnal in procession. ...
- The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (no. 281) notes that Holy Communion has a more complete form as a sign when it is received under both kinds. Therefore, the reception of communion under both forms is encouraged. When communion is received in this manner, musicians should be aware that more time is usually available for the communion song. Also, when selecting the communion song, musicians ought to consider carefully the text of the hymn and how it speaks of eating and drinking of the Lord's Body and Blood, so that the words correspond to the ritual action.

As this excerpt indicates, it is preferable to set the text with a refrain which can be easily sung by the assembly as they approach the ministers of Communion. The text for the refrain ought to be brief and memorable so that the people are not encumbered by books during the procession.

If a hymn is composed to be sung following the Communion procession, it ought to be set to ensure the participation of the entire assembly.

Closing (Recessional) Hymn

35 While the Roman Missal makes no mention of a closing (recessional) hymn, it is customary in many places for the assembly and/or choir to sing as the ministers leave the sanctuary. Alternatively, instrumental music may be used to accompany the ministers, and may in fact be preferable at times.

When composing music to be sung at the conclusion of the liturgy, it is important to observe the principles cited in the criteria for assessing music and texts (above).